

## Message Text

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20

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 SAM-01 SY-04 OPR-02 A-01 PER-05

DRC-01 /127 W

----- 079148

R 110800Z APR 74

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 901

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USINT DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 221

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IZ

SUBJECT: KURDISH AUTONOMY CONFLICT

REF: BAGHDADD 183

1. WAR OF NERVES BETWEEN BARZANI AND BAATH REGIME CONTINUES, BUT BOTH SIDES STILL APPEAR RELUCTANT TO CLOSE NEGOTIATING DOOR AND RENEW FIGHTING. ON APRIL 6 MINISTRY OF DEFENSE CALLED UP ALL RESERVES BORN IN 1947 TO ACTIVE DUTY. ON APRIL 7 RCC REPLACED FIVE KURDISH MINISTERS WITH "SAFE" KURDS. IT HAD EARLIER REPLACED GOVERNORS OF KURDISH PROVINCES OF SULIMANIYAH, IRBIL AND DOHUK. INCUMBENTS HAD ALREADY DESERTED THEIR POSTS IN MARCH TO JOIN BARZANI. MOBILIZATION AND MOVEMENT OF MORE TROOPS TO NORTH ALSO REPORTEDLY TAKING PLACE. AT SAAME TIME, GOI CONTINUES TO PUBLICIZE WHAT IT HAS DONE FOR KURDISTAN AND ANNOUNCED THAT SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS OF 100 MILLION DOLLARS ARE DESIGNATED FOR KURDISH AREA  
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IN FY 75 INVESTMENT BUDGET. PRESS REPORTING ON RETURN OF

KURDS TO THEIR JOBS AND HOMES, BUT OTHER INFO SUGGESTS OPPOSITE, FOR EXAMPLE, PAPAL NUNCIO'S ASSISTANT TOLD ME APRIL 9 THAT 700 CHRISTIAN FAMILIES HAD COME TO BAGHDAD LEAVING ALL POSSESSIONS IN DISPUTED AREAS IN NORTH. HE ALSO SAID SOME CHRISTIANS HAD JOINED BARZANI'S FORCES, APPARENTLY AS WAY OF STRIKING AT DICTATORIAL BAATH REGIME. INDIAN EMBOFF SAID SULAMANIYAH UNIVERSITY DESERTED, WITH KURDS GOING TO NORTH AND ARABS TO BAGHDAD; 22 FOREIGN INSTRUCTORS WERE ALL OF FACULTY THAT REMAINED. HE ALSO SAID PESH MERGA NOW CONTROLLING ROAD BETWEEN SULAMANIYAH AND KIRKUK.

2. COMUNIST DIPLOMATS, WHO HAVE BEEN CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTING GOI POSITION, ARE WARNING OF FULL SCALE FIGHTING IF BARZANI DOES NOT COMPROMISE. HUNGARIAN MILATT MADE POINT OF TELLING ME APRIL 10 THAT TWO MOUNTAIN DIVISIONS AND ONE INF DIV NOW POISED ON EDGE OF KURDISH-CONTROLLED TERRITORY, BACKED UP BY TWO ARMORED BRIGADES AND FOUR SQUADRONS A/C. HE PREDICTED THAT OFFENSIVE WOULD BE LAUNCHED APRIL 26, EXPIRY DATE OF AMNESTY FOR KURDS TO RETURN TO JOBS, IF SETTLEMENT NOT REACHED. HE ALSO SAID 5,000 ARMED KURDS FROM SSYRIA HAD RECENTLY JOINED BARZANI.

3. KURDISH LEADERSHIP SHOWS NO OUTWARD SIGN OF COMPROMISE. VOICE OF KURDISTAN, WHOSE SIGNAL IS STRONG ON MW IN BAGHDAD, CONTINUES TO BROADCAST EVENING REPORTS OF SKIRMISHES AND CLAIMS OF POPULATION RALLYING TO ITS CAUSE. IT RIDICULES INFLUENCE OF GOI APPOINTED KURDISH MINISTERS AND THEIR PRETENSION IN SAYING KDP IS JOINING NATIONAL FRONT.

4. IN APRIL 8 INTERVIEW RCC VICE CHAIRMAN SADDAM HUSSEIN MADE SEVERAL REFERENCES TO KURDS BEING ARMED WITH AMERICAN ARMS, BUT HIS CLEAREST ACCUSATIONS WERE AGAINST IRAN. HE CLAIMED BARZANI NO LONGER REPRESENTED KURDISH PEOPLE AND THAT MEMBERS OF HIS OWN FAMILY WITH HIM IN NORTH DIFFERED WITH STAND. HE SAID NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WOULD BE CREATED IN NEXT FEW MONTHS IN COOPERATION WITH NEW KURDISH LEADERSHIP.

5. COMMENT: MOST OMINOUS DEVELOPMENT FOR US IS INCREASING  
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NUMBER OF RUMORS ABOUT U.S. SUPPORT FOR KURDS. IF SITUATION DETERIORATES WE CAN EXPECT GOI TO DROP CIRCUMSPECTION OF SADDAM HUSSEIN'S RECENT REMARKS AND ATTACK U.S. DIRECTLY AND VIOLENTLY. OFFICIAL DENIAL AS SUGGESTED IN PARA 3 OF BAGHDAD 153 WOULD BE USEFUL. DESPITE MILITARY PREPARATIONS, I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE REGIME WILL LAUNCH FULL SCALE OFFENSIVE ONLY AS LAST RESORT. WHAT DOES SEEM LIKELY ARE SOME MILITARY ACTIONS AIMED AT SPECIFIC TARGETS

SUCH AS VOICE OF KURDISTAN TRANSMITTER AND VILLAGES NEAR  
BARZANI'S HDQS. LOWRIE

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## Message Attributes

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